

SCOTTSDALE - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today visited Navajo Elementary School in Scottsdale to highlight the economic and educational benefits of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education. Navajo is a STEM-focused magnet school that puts resources and focus on hands-on science instruction in an effort to boost achievement across a broad spectrum of subjects.

"As a former teacher, I know how important it is to make science, technology, engineering and math education a priority," Mitchell said. "It was great to see how well the teachers and administrators at Navajo Elementary are building excitement and interest in STEM education. Whether it's working on LEGO robots or building scale- model dams, the kids are getting hands-on experience that makes learning engaging, relevant and fun. Congress must now do what it can to strengthen STEM education, which will also help ensure that our nation will remain competitive in an era of technological innovation."

Mitchell is a co-sponsor of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act, H.R. 5116, to make investments in science, innovation, and education. These investments will bolster U.S. scientific and economic leadership, support businesses and create jobs for American workers. Additionally, this bill will expand and strengthen STEM education programs at all levels of education, ultimately strengthening America's workforce and making American more competitive in the global market.

H.R. 5116 also includes legislative language sponsored by Mitchell to amend the Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program, a program to train future STEM teachers, to reduce the cost-sharing requirement for participating colleges and universities during these tough economic times.

"If U.S. students are going to remain competitive in a global economy, it is vitally important that we recruit and train qualified and motivated STEM teachers to work in our k-12 schools," Mitchell said. "The Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program does exactly that. It is especially crucial to make it easier and less expensive for universities to provide this valuable training during these tough economic times."

Mitchell was joined by Bill Harris, President and CEO of the Arizona Science Foundation, Darcy Renfro, Vice President and Director of STEM Initiatives for the ASF, as well as Navajo

Elementary's award-winning Robobuffs LEGO Robotics Team.

Over 750 organizations endorsed the legislation, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Business Roundtable, the Council on Competitiveness, the Association of American Universities, the Biotechnology Industry Organization, TechNet, American Council on Education and American Association for the Advancement of Science.

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